

## Commercial Vineyard Establishment Costs

(from a talk given by Allan Dillard, Limestone Creek (Illinois) Agricultural Resources, at the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Association 1998 Annual Conference, May 5-6-7, 1998, Waterloo, Illinois)

### Estimated Expenses

	Per Acre
Site Preparation (sub-soil, row establishment)	\$ 150
End posts (30 @ \$6.50)	195
Line posts (165 @ \$3.00)	495
Anchors (30 @ \$3.00)	90
#9 mild wire (2 rolls of 170 ft)	45
12.5 ga. Hi-tensile wire	75
Stakes/Vine shelters (grow tubes) (optional, but highly recommended)	450
Tensioners (Gripples) plus tool	100
Trellis establishment (posts driven or set, wire installed, etc.: 60 man hours)	360
Vines (600 @ average price of \$1.75 each)	1,050
Planting (by hand) 30 man hours @ \$6.00	180
Training 0 30 man hours @ \$6.00	180
Maintenance (mowing, weed control) 24 man hours @ \$6.00	144
Chemicals (fungicides, herbicides)	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,634</b>

This cost is assuming all operations are completed in one season. You could establish rows and trellis system the first year and plant in the second year or vice versa. Also, these cost estimates are only for materials and labor for one year. Capital expenses, including equipment such as a tractor, sprayers, mower, post driver or drill, picking lugs, trailer, etc., would amount to approximately an additional \$12,000. Costs for ongoing vineyard maintenance can be estimated as follows:

Vine/Trellis maintenance - materials	\$ 60
Vine/Trellis maintenance - labor (pruning, tying up, etc.) 80 hrs @ \$6.00	480
Machine maintenance/repair	250
Spraying/mowing operations - labor 48 hours @ \$6.00	288
Chemicals	200
Picking - labor 48 hours @ \$6.00	288
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,566</b>

Estimated income from this acre, beginning year three (about 50% crop level) and continuing thereafter is as follows:

Income - year three; approximately 2 tons @ \$600 - \$800	\$1200-1600
Income - year four and thereafter; approximately 4 tons @ \$600 - \$800	\$2400-3200

If you choose not to use vine shelters, these harvest estimates will be lower and possibly also begin **one year later**, so you can see how the investment in shelters can pay for itself quickly. Based on these estimates, one can assume a net during the fourth season of about \$800 - \$1,600, continuing each year thereafter. This will obviously change if crop levels are higher, which is quite possible with some cultivars, or if prices paid are higher.